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ABSTRACT

Few efforts have been made to inject teachers' voices into discussions on school restructuring. Qualitative, in-depth interviews were conducted with 14 teachers to ascertain what the "average" teacher thinks about restructuring. The majority of interviewees held positive perceptions about restructuring, but opinions differed on the feasibility of changing schools. Hopes for interdisciplinary curriculums integrated across time and subject matter and for school climates that fostered a sense of unity were widespread. Teachers also expressed desires for more freedom to teach what they think is best and additional support personnel. Almost all teachers felt that more social and academic benefits would be available to students as a result of restructuring. The interview questionnaire is appended. (26 references) (EJS)

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Restructuring Schools: Fourteen Elementary and Secondary Teachers' Perspectives on Reform

by

Joseph Murphy, Carolyn M. Evertson
and Mary L. Radnofsky
Vanderbilt University

Occasional Paper No. 9

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   This paper presents a basic model of the relationship between leadership, situation, and outcomes. Personal characteristics of leaders and the situation in which leaders find themselves both influence what leaders do, which in turn influences the kinds of outcomes that they produce. Embedded in the model are three questions: "What is good school leadership?" "How does good school leadership come about?" and "What will good school leadership mean in the future?" Systematic ways of approaching these questions are also presented.

2. *Preparing School Administrators for the Twenty-First Century: The Reform Agenda* by Joseph Murphy; Vanderbilt University (May 1990)

   In the second wave of school reform reports and studies of the 1980s, much attention has been directed to issues of school administration and leadership. Yet, to date, no comprehensive analysis of these calls for changes in school administration has been undertaken. The purpose of this paper is to provide such a review. The goals of the paper are threefold: (1) to explain the reasons for the calls for reform of school administration, (2) to review the major studies and reports on education reform from 1982 to 1988 and (3) to discuss educational administration reform issues that need further attention.

3. *What Makes a Difference? School Context, Principal Leadership, and Student Achievement* by Philip Hallinger, Leonard Bickman, and Ken Davis; Vanderbilt University (June 1990)

   This paper addresses the general question, what makes a difference in school learning? We report the results of a secondary analysis of data collected as part of the Tennessee School Improvement Incentives Project. We utilized the instructional leadership model developed by researchers at the Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development to guide our analyses. This conceptual model makes provision for analysis of principal leadership in relation to features of the school environment, school-level organization, and student outcomes. The paper focuses on the following research questions: (1) What antecedents appear to influence principal leadership behavior? (2) What impact does principal leadership have on the organization and its outcomes? (3) To what extent is the Far West Lab instructional leadership framework supported empirically by the data collected in this study?

4. *The Teaching Project at the Edward Devotion School: A Case Study of a Teacher-Initiated Restructuring Project* by Katherine C. Boles; Harvard University (September 1990)

   School districts around the country are in the process of initiating projects to restructure their schools. A small but growing number of these restructuring projects have been initiated by teachers, but as yet little has been written documenting the experience of classroom practitioners involved in such efforts. The purpose of this study is to add teachers' voices to the literature on restructuring. This project restructured a portion of a school and altered the work of a group of third and fourth grade teachers.

5. *Educational Reform in the 1980s: Explaining Some Surprising Success* by Joseph Murphy; Vanderbilt University (September 1990)

In this paper issues of success and failure of reform initiatives are discussed from both sides of the aisle. The paper begins with a review of the financial, political, and organizational factors which normally support the position that reform measures are likely to result in few substantive improvements. Next the argument is made that educational reform recommendations have been surprisingly successful, and some speculations as to the reasons for this unexpected outcome are presented.

6. *New Settings and Changing Norms for Principal Development* by Philip Hallinger; Vanderbilt University and Robert Wimpelberg; University of New Orleans (January 1991)

Recently analysts have identified a variety of features that distinguish emerging administrative training programs from traditional ones. The rapid, but non-systematic growth in organizations providing administrative development services during the 1980's led to considerable natural variation in programmatic content as well as in organizational processes. In particular, significant variations emerged in the operation of state sponsored leadership academies and local principals' centers. The purpose of this paper is to analyze variations in current approaches to educational leadership development. The paper addresses three questions: (1) What is the range of variation among emerging staff development programs for school leaders on dimensions of program content and organizational process? (2) What can we learn from the naturally occurring variations in administrative development? (3) What are the most likely and promising directions for administrative development programs in the next decade?

7. *Images of Leadership* by Lee G. Bolman; Harvard University and Terrence E. Deal; Vanderbilt University (January 1991)

This project has undertaken a major study of the "frames", or orientations that leaders use to guide their understanding of their work. The investigators have developed a set of survey instruments to measure four leadership orientations (structural, human resource, political, and symbolic), and collected data from leaders approach their task constituents in both education and the private sector. Their research results show that the four leadership orientations do capture significant elements of how leaders approach their task, and that those leadership variables are significantly associated with effectiveness. The results further show that the variables which predict effectiveness as a *manager* are different from those that predict effectiveness as a *leader*. In particular, structural and rational orientations are primarily predictive of manager effectiveness. This research was reported at the AERA meeting in April, 1990.

8. *Trouble in Paradise: Teacher Conflicts in Shared Decision Making* by Carol H. Weiss, Joseph Cambone and Alexander Wyeth; Harvard University (April 1991)

Many educators advocate teacher participation in school decision making as one strategy for improving schools. Through interviews with teachers and administrators in high schools that have adopted some version of shared decision making, the authors locate both advantages and disadvantages. Advantages center on great commitment and "ownership" of decisions. Disadvantages include, besides heavy time demands, the necessity for teachers to confront and negotiate with each other, a process that requires skills many teachers lack. There may also be conflicts with administrators, often because of unclear definitions of authority and responsibility. Suggestions are made for overcoming such problems.

9. *Restructuring Schools: Fourteen Elementary and Secondary Teachers' Persepctives on Reform* by Joseph Murphy, Carolyn M. Evertson and Mary L. Radnofsky; Vanderbilt University (May 1991)

Few efforts have been made to inject classroom teachers' voices into discussions on restructuring. In this article, we report on one exploratory study that begins to address this oversight. We interviewed 14 teachers from diverse roles about their views on the restructuring movement in general. We wanted to hear what they thought of the concept and to determine what effects they anticipated in restructuring schools. We also elicited their perceptions about what changes they would make in both the schools and classrooms if they were thrust into a school undergoing restructuring. We found that, while in some ways the views of these teachers were consistent with prevailing perspectives in the restructuring movement, in other cases, their preferences were at odds with the general body of literature on restructuring. We concluded that, while these teachers are optimistic about the possibilities of fundamental school reform, they remain skeptical about their ability to change the current educational system.

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Restructuring Schools: Fourteen Elementary and Secondary Teachers' Perspectives on Reform

by

Joseph Murphy, Carolyn M. Evertson
and Mary L. Radnofsky

> *Teachers probably know what individual students need to succeed better than decision-makers who are far removed from the classroom.* (Harvey & Crandall, 1988, p. 31)

Beginning with the release of three highly influential reform documents in 1986 (Carnegie Forum, 1986; Holmes Group, 1986; National Governors' Association, 1986), the current era of educational reform shifted directions, from repair of the existing infrastructure of schooling to restructuring or transforming the entire educational enterprise (Murphy, 1990). Serious endeavors to reinvent schooling have been underway ever since (e.g., David, 1989; Elmore, 1988; Murphy, in press). Initial restructuring efforts focused on empowering teachers. More recent efforts have centered on school-based management (SBM) and parental choice.

However, surprisingly few reformers have tried to draw connections between these three strategies and classroom activities, processes, and effects. Thus, as the Council of Chief State School Officers (1989) recently concluded, teacher empowerment, SBM, and parental choice are increasingly being treated as ends in themselves rather than as means to improved learning for students. Equally disconcerting has been the virtual absence of attention to restructuring the teaching-learning process itself--to teaching for understanding--as a fourth avenue of

fundamental reform. As the National Governors' Association (1989, p. 1) reported: "Few reform reports have touched on the heart of the educational process, what is taught and how it is taught." Finally, we are puzzled by the lack of teacher voices in the discussion about restructuring. We find many reformers speaking for teachers, but few cases of teachers describing their own visions about what the schools of the future should look like (see Carnegie Foundation, 1988, for an exception).

Although we can explain the pattern inherent in these phenomena--the separation of the technology of schooling from its supporting structure and the subsequent focus on structure (Meyer & Rowan, 1975)--we still find the lack of attention to teaching and learning in the school restructuring movement troubling. We continue to believe that, since teaching and learning form the heart of all schooling operations, our understanding of educational processes in restructured schools should be at least as well developed as is our understanding of school-based management, teacher empowerment, and choice.

Moreover, through our study of restructured schools, we have arrived at a very disturbing conclusion: the connections between these other components of change--authority wielded by teachers, discretion enjoyed at the school level, and options available to parents--and improved educational processes and outcomes are tenuous at best (Murphy, in press, chapter 6; see also Hawley, 1988; Malen, Ogawa, & Kranz, 1989; Rothman, 1990). Therefore, we maintain that revisions in organizational and governance structures should "backward map" (Elmore, 1979-80) from the student. That is, fundamental discussions about how to restructure educational processes for

more effective learning should precede the restructuring of other aspects of schooling (see also Sykes & Elmore, 1989).

This article is part of a larger study investigating the effects of restructuring on teaching and learning. Our goal in that study is to identify those aspects of classroom life that restructuring actually touches, to see if fundamental school reform leads to radical changes that deeply affect teachers and students or if changes will stop at the classroom door, leaving the teaching-learning process largely unaltered. In order to help us answer this question we have identified six sources for developing a picture of what a restructuring of classroom activities and processes might look like: 1) national reform reports and studies from educational groups, especially those involving curricular reform; 2) analogues developed from other aspects of restructuring (e.g., teacher empowerment, parental choice); 3) information and reports from districts pioneering restructuring efforts; 4) the teacher and school effects literature; 5) recent research on student cognition; and 6) interviews with teachers and principals (Evertson, Murphy & Radnofsky, 1990; Murphy, in press, chapter 5). We use the framework constructed from these sources to assess the extent of change in classrooms that are engaged in restructuring efforts.

In this article we report on the one way of knowing about restructuring that has received the least attention--the perceptions and beliefs of classroom teachers. Using a definition of restructuring that includes site-based management and equal participation in decision-making among principals, teachers, and parents, with some student input as well, we asked teachers to speculate, to dream, to draw up a wish

list, to describe the ideal school environment, to imagine changes on both the school and classroom levels, and to discuss with us how such changes might be implemented.

Method

Sample

Fourteen teachers--13 women and 1 man--from both private and public schools in the greater Nashville area participated in the study. Six were elementary school teachers, two taught at the junior high or middle school level, and six others taught secondary school. Participants ranged in age from 26 to 50 and in teaching experience from 3 to 20 years. Twelve of the teachers had masters degrees.

Since our goal was to describe what the "average" teacher thinks about school restructuring, we selected participants who were neither outstanding teachers nor experiencing serious difficulties. All of the teachers were known to the investigators. Professional judgments formed in the course of working with the teachers were used to make the selections. Second, because so little is known about teachers' views on restructuring, we decided that an exploratory study employing qualitative methodology would be most appropriate. In a similar vein, because our goal was to portray teachers' voices, we used in-depth interviewing. Finally, because our objective was to probe deeply into teachers' perspectives and to develop rich descriptions of their views on restructuring, we chose a small sample with whom we could work more intensively. We readily acknowledge the limitations that accompany the choices made

in the methods of conducting the study--particularly those that accompany the small sample size--and present our results within the context created by these limitations.

Instrument

A scheduled interview protocol (see Appendix) was developed for use in this study (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984). The instrument, which consisted of 22 open-ended questions, was constructed from our own studies and from literature reviews of the six ways of understanding restructuring at the classroom level noted above.

The teachers were first to address a series of open-ended, non-cued questions regarding their general feelings about restructuring, their beliefs about whom they thought might be affected, and their thoughts about the changes that would have to take place both in education in general and in their specific schools in order for restructuring to occur. We then moved to more specific topics and gathered teachers' perceptions about areas of potential change at both the classroom and the school levels: the teaching-learning process in general, teachers' relationships with students, culture/climate, budget, curriculum, professional development, schedules, expenditures of time, specific teaching practices, organization of students for learning, management of student behavior, outcomes for students, students' interactions with other students, and students' interactions with teachers. Finally, we provided two role-playing scenarios in which, as a member of the school-based decision-making group, each teacher was charged with developing strategies to establish a learning orientation, to encourage student responsibility for learning, and to improve student learning outcomes.

The framework of the interview protocol was meant to guide the teachers to think of restructuring first in the most general terms--to collect their thoughts on who would be affected, what broad changes would occur, what general school changes and classroom changes they would expect--and then to focus on specific changes at the school and classroom levels. Redundancy was a deliberate feature of the interview protocol. We asked questions that involved the same persons in different contexts. We also addressed similar issues at multiple levels (school, classroom, small group) to learn how teachers view teaching-learning themes at different organizational levels of schooling.

Data Collection and Analyses

The interviews took place at the convenience of the participants, at their homes, in their schools, or in our offices at the university. Each interview lasted approximately 1 hour. Audio recordings were made of the interviews, and these were transcribed and then checked against the taped interviews.

Transcriptions were analyzed qualitatively following procedures outlined by Miles and Huberman (1984) and Goetz and LeCompte (1984). Coding and analytic induction were employed to develop the themes presented in the remainder of this report.

Results and Discussion

General Perceptions of Restructuring

In the questions in this section, we attempted to secure teachers' views of restructuring with as few directions or leads as possible (see Appendix). Our goal was to discern their perceptions uninfluenced by our views to the maximum extent possible. We focused on what they thought of the idea, who and what might be affected, and the conditions that would hinder or promote transformational change.

Eight of the teachers gave unhesitatingly positive and even enthusiastic responses when first asked about the general idea of restructuring. Two of them believed they already were involved in restructuring activities in their schools, and five others felt that meaningful inclusion of teachers in the decision-making processes would significantly improve their schools.

In their early remarks, and despite their enthusiasm in most cases, many of the teachers mentioned problems that have been identified elsewhere as hindering the improvement of student learning. They were skeptical of anyone or anything being able to dislodge power from administrators and doubted being able ever to get parents truly involved. They complained that the organizational and management structures in schools have become overwhelming, to the point of depersonalizing education. As have others, they found in the bureaucratic infrastructure of education an explanation for the current crisis in education (Murphy, in press, chapter 2).

Opinions differed regarding the feasibility of changing schools, with their layers of "organizational sediment" and a century of "institutional guidance" (Cohen, 1989).

Teachers saw the present system as being quite bad and explained that it functioned only because of a few good teachers, though they believed that such exemplary teachers were usually not visible to the public or even to their own colleagues. At the same time that they expressed a good deal of skepticism about the ability of schools to change, they argued that fundamental changes provided the only hope for real improvement.

Somewhat surprisingly given their proximity to learners, these teachers--like almost everyone else in this era of restructuring--viewed reinventing schooling through organizational and governance frames rather than in terms of the core technology of education and effects on students. Although all 14 teachers believed that they would be affected in one way or another by restructuring efforts, only seven reported that the curriculum would be influenced, and their discussion of these effects was quite limited. Similarly, only six teachers reported that students would be affected. Those who did described changes such as reduced numbers of dropouts, more integration between regular and special education programs, more responsible and self-confident students, enhanced pupil interest in learning, and youths who would be better thinkers.

In terms of their own roles in restructured schools, teachers envisioned shared leadership, a greater sense of responsibility, and shared ownership in the new educational enterprise. They anticipated new roles, redesigned jobs and responsibilities, and more collaborative work with their peers. Although most of

them anticipated positive changes for teachers, a number were concerned about possible increases in pressure, the potential for mistrust, and additional paperwork.

By and large, these teachers believed that restructuring would affect parents. However, their perspectives were quite different from the robust conceptions of parental choice and voice that permeate the school restructuring literature (Murphy, in press, chapter 4). Our teacher respondents tended to focus on more traditional, less fundamental, school-community issues such as: helping parents understand the educational process; improved communication with the larger community; building parental support for the school; and involving businesses in the reform process. The notion that parents should be empowered to help direct school operations was generally conspicuous by its absence from the remarks of these teachers. When it did surface, it was usually viewed with skepticism.

There were two distinct perceptions about how restructuring would influence the administration of schools. Given the view held by some (and noted earlier) that principals have much of the power and authority in schools and the concomitant belief that they would be reluctant to relinquish it, one group of teachers wanted the role of administrators deemphasized and their influence greatly reduced. They believed that decision-making should be handed over to the teaching staff and that principals should maintain their administrative duties and leave teachers alone. A second group believed that principals should be given more power to do their jobs ("the building principal ought to be given a whole lot more power to fire teachers

that aren't performing") and that principals should devote substantially more energy to working with teachers on the important issues of schooling (e.g., the curriculum).

There was a fair amount of consensus on what was needed to make restructuring work. For more than half the teachers, improved communication and collaboration would be needed within the teaching staff, between teachers and administrators, between teachers and parents, and between the school and the community. Commitment to these new partnerships was seen as essential, as was "having trust in the system . . . a belief that it can be done." Toward this end, the interviewees mentioned the need for educating parents and the community, for ousting local political leaders, and for implementing numerous structural changes in schools.

Teachers also discussed the need for professional development for themselves, administrators, and (as reported earlier) parents. They believed that they needed education to help them learn how to lead. Because of their recognized lack of experience in areas such as budgeting and hiring and with processes such as group decision making, they also reported the need for what they viewed as administrative skills. For their principals, they saw the need for learning methods of leading through collaboration and consensus, or, as one teacher succinctly put it, to learn how to be "not as domineering."

One theme echoed by nearly all of the teachers was that of time. Often this came in the form of a call for changes that would allow them more uninterrupted instructional time, time to meet with parents, time to prepare better, time to move

at their own pace, time to relax with students, time to collaborate with other teachers, time to observe one another teach, time to attend workshops, time to take the students out of the classroom, and time to meet with students individually. In several of these instances, the need for more time was based on the number of students the teachers dealt with on a daily basis, in some cases up to 150. Three teachers mentioned frustrations they experienced because of interruptions from the public address system; two admitted to having rigged the speaker so that they could switch it on and off. One teacher summed up this sentiment: "I don't think there should be anything that is priority over what I'm doing." Ten of the 14 teachers called for reduced class size in conjunction with and to support changes in curriculum, schedules, climate, teachers' relationships with students, and other approaches to restructuring schools.

Changes in Classrooms and Schools

After we had heard teachers' general perceptions about restructuring, we asked them to think through the specific components of reform most commonly found in the literature on teacher empowerment--school-based management, choice, and reforming the teaching-learning process. We asked them how conditions, processes, and activities might change in both schools and classrooms if they were empowered to make decisions in a collegial manner with their peers (and parents and the principal). It is important to remember at this point that the questions we posed in these areas were very general, e.g., "Given SBM and shared decision making, what

changes would you see in the area of curriculum?" No cues or probes were provided to guide the respondents. We group the themes from the transcripts into seven sections--curriculum, climate, teacher work, interpersonal dynamics, organizing for learning and managing behavior, supporting structure, and student outcomes--for discussion below.

Curriculum. Of the four curricular themes evident in the responses of these teachers, two are quite consistent with suggestions provided in restructuring reform reports (Murphy, in press, chapter 5, for a review). The most consistent was teachers' desire for an interdisciplinary curriculum integrated across time as well as across subject matter. With all that there is to learn in today's world, they affirmed, the idea was to teach the whole child, to rid education of curricular incongruity, and to replace it with a sense of continuity and interrelatedness. Second, they envisioned a much larger role for themselves in developing this new curriculum. They saw diminished responsibility for the state and district--three wanted these actors completely out of curriculum development, while two others believed that administrators should have a much less central role in creating the new curriculum. Consistent with our earlier discussion, although a few teachers mentioned student input in the process of curriculum development, only one foresaw a role for parents. Third, teachers were much more attentive to the development of a curriculum that enhanced self-esteem--both of students and teachers--than was the reform literature of the 1980s. In many ways, they saw self-esteem as an essential condition that would promote movement toward other important goals. They clearly saw the curriculum

as a vehicle to promote the development of this important outcome of schooling. Finally, given the power to control curriculum, many teachers reported that they would make available a specific course for their students, e.g., an AIDS curriculum, or a home economics course at the elementary level. These suggestions were idiosyncratic and, at least on the surface, inconsistent with expressed interests in developing an integrated, interdisciplinary curriculum.

Climate. The most widespread hope of these teachers concerning the climate in their restructured schools was that it would foster a sense of belonging and unity among staff and between teachers and students. Responsibility for one's peers, cooperation, and a resulting sense of cohesiveness were themes several of the teachers developed. They maintained that this sense of unity would also make schooling meaningful to students and in turn make students proud to be a part of their school, or, as one teacher put it, they would all see "that every teacher has an investment in the school and in the kids. It would be connected, not just 55 minutes here and 55 minutes there."

A focus on students in this question came from numerous teachers who believed that goals in their restructured schools would focus more on students, that there would be more student participation, that learning would be fun, and that students would believe in the system and in themselves. These teachers described their desired atmosphere as relaxed, affecting the students but also the teachers, who would no longer feel overwhelmed by the frenetic pace, the vast quantity of subject matter to teach, and the large number of students for whom they were responsible.

These teachers described the overall environment of restructured schools as "freer"--one characterized by openness, honesty, group cohesiveness, self-confidence, consideration for others, enhanced responsibility, and an increase in the number and quality of interactions among teachers, students, and administrators. A number of teachers suggested that the atmosphere in their restructured schools would be much more vibrant, and one said that school life would be "incredibly more exciting, because everyone from the top down would feel more empowered." In short, 12 of these teachers believed that restructuring would lead to important social/emotional changes in their schools and classrooms--to the evolution of a school climate that would contribute to the mental health and welfare of students and staff.

Teachers predicted other generally favorable environmental changes in schools. Teachers believed that their schools would be more open, uninhibited, friendly, and that fewer discipline problems would occur. Concurrently, they saw a reduction in existing racial tensions, with minority students feeling as though they were being treated fairly. They argued that control from external sources would allow the creation of more racially integrated classes and the enhancement of equal learning opportunity, and that flexibility would permit diversity of interests to be nurtured. Meaningfulness and, therefore, transfer of knowledge would be achieved, with a classroom full of self-motivated students who would understand the importance of the task at hand. In their restructured schools, teachers predicted a climate in which students would be responsible for each other's as well as for their own learning and would feel comfortable enough to discuss ideas with their teachers. It was clear

from their responses that teachers saw reciprocal effects between the curricular changes they believed would result from restructuring and the changed climate they could envision for their schools.

And yet, as with almost all areas discussed, more pessimistic predictions could be seen in reform. Three teachers believed that negative results might accompany restructuring attempts. They were concerned about the unlikelihood of getting all teachers involved. They worried that, even if they could take control of the organization and get all teachers involved, teachers would be unable to reach agreements. There was a fear best expressed by one respondent that the teachers would always "need a moderator or a principal that would have the final say."

Teacher work. Critical of the predominate instructional practices found in U.S. classrooms (Goodlad, 1984; Sizer, 1984), teachers hoped that in their restructured schools there would be less reliance on lectures and worksheets. In addition, almost all of the teachers wanted the freedom to teach what they thought would be best for their students. They believed that greater teacher choice would open up the possibility of integrating subjects and creating a truly interdisciplinary educational environment, one in which students would be taught critical thinking skills--especially synthesis--and be involved in meaningful hands-on activities. They foresaw the benefits of enhanced instructional flexibility transferring to other areas as well. As one teacher noted, "teachers would begin trying to have what is going on in their classroom feed or enhance what is going on somewhere else and would be looking for things in other classrooms."

Time as a critical resource surfaced again and again as these teachers described their restructured schools. They pointed out one inescapable conclusion: the curriculum, climate, and instructional formats they envisioned would require more time and cost more money. They discussed issues of time not in the abstract but in terms of class size, special students, individual and small-group work, teacher needs, and so forth. They crafted a four-part plan in the area of time usage. At one level--conditions of work--they believed that more time should be available for their personal and developmental needs. They would, therefore, make sure that in their restructured schools time was scheduled for such activities as professional and personal phone calls, writing mini-grant proposals, personal hygiene, and individual research activities. Second, they believed that they could make better use of the time currently available if their work were more closely coordinated with that of their colleagues, if they could structure more cooperative student work (including peer tutoring), and if they could more effectively employ the talents of parents and other community members in instruction. Third, as they projected themselves into the future, these teachers foresaw more of their available time being devoted to instructional activities. They saw themselves much less heavily engaged in traditional "institutional" responsibilities (e.g., monitoring lunchrooms). To fill the time that would be freed by the elimination of these duties, many of the teachers proposed a full agenda of student-centered planning and teaching activities. As one respondent succinctly put it: "Give me more teaching duties; I'd love it!" Finally, there was an overwhelming consensus that the schools of tomorrow would need to provide more

time for teachers to accomplish everything that they wanted for students and to meet the expectations of parents and society at large. Their focus here was on fewer students with whom they could work more intensively.

Interpersonal dynamics. Teachers responded to a series of questions that yielded a good deal of information about the human interactions in their restructured schools and classrooms. In general, they saw the schools of tomorrow as much healthier places for human exchange. These teachers, especially at the high school level, explained that in their restructured schools, student interactions with their peers would be grounded on an awareness of and respect for one another's differences. They believed that students would share more common goals than they do now, that they would learn to work better together, and that from this sense of respect and cooperative work they would develop a strong sense of cohesiveness that would permit them to learn from one another.

Although initially hesitant to describe new personal relationships with students that would leave them untethered to the safe traditional moorings of organizational authority and control, when convinced that conditions really could change, almost all the teachers outlined relations with students quite different than those found in most schools today. They believed that "getting to know the students more personally" was a central tenet of restructuring. They described a new relationship in which students and teachers would feel as if they were co-learners. They spoke of cooperation and mutual responsibility for learning. They chronicled interactions characterized by trust, cohesiveness, safety, and other family-like qualities. They talked about more one-on-

one counseling, tutoring, problem solving, and planning. One of the most consistent themes was the belief that student-teacher relationships in restructured schools would be personally rather than organizationally mediated.

Ten of the respondents hoped that in their restructured schools they would be able to conduct their work in such a way that students would focus primarily on the human element in the teaching-learning process. They explained that this new interaction would take the form of a friendship, a partnership, a kind of bonding, and would, in most cases, show the students that the teachers truly cared about them as individuals. They spoke of their belief that students would see them as approachable rather than as omniscient. The students, they maintained, would see school as a "safe" place to be and would be unafraid to approach teachers with either academic or social questions. In general, the teachers believed that when students were given more control over their education, positive changes in student-teacher interactions would occur.

Organizing for learning and managing behavior. Almost all the teachers reported that there would be both heterogeneous and homogeneous grouping by ability in their restructured schools. Only one teacher believed that the schools of tomorrow would employ only heterogeneous grouping. There was a feeling that, whatever grouping arrangements were employed in restructured schools, students must have an opportunity to learn from one another. By and large, however, teachers saw change in this area somewhat narrowly, that is, within the confines of

their own classrooms. There was almost no discussion of grouping between classrooms.

Questions regarding the management of student behavior in restructured schools left most teachers searching for more and different things they themselves could do, such as providing positive reinforcement, seeking training in discipline techniques, improving their teaching, improving their attitudes, offering incentives, sharing trade secrets with one another, and so forth. In fact, there were more different ideas about changes in this area than with any other topic. Although four teachers spoke about the importance of students being responsible for other students' actions, and three teachers discussed the importance of student participation in the establishment of rules, for the most part these teachers saw student behavior in restructured schools as a domain that would continue to be controlled largely by teachers. The only other theme in these responses was the belief that restructured schools would be characterized by uniform rules that would be consistently enforced throughout a school. There was a general feeling that this would facilitate cooperation in classrooms and throughout the school and would in turn lead to enhanced student learning.

Supporting structure. We were interested in determining the types of changes that teachers would make in some of the structural elements of the school--budget, schedules, training programs--to support their conceptions of restructuring. We began by asking them to examine the school budget. As with many areas investigated in this study, especially those over which they have historically had little influence,

teachers had difficulty accepting the fact that they would actually have control over resource allocations. Even though this power was explicitly detailed in the definition of restructuring we provided them and was clearly restated in a number of our questions, seven of the teachers began their budget discussions by arguing for the need for teacher participation in the budget process. The idea of influence over school resources was so foreign to three teachers that they experienced extreme difficulty in projecting how they would use their new power.

A priority for eight of the teachers interviewed was purchasing additional instructional materials and supplies (e.g., video cameras, computers, tape, scissors, math manipulatives). Three of the teachers also described how they would employ resources to create more and differently configured work and learning spaces in their restructured schools, including a sound-proof space "that you could destroy constantly and rehearse in and be as crazy as you wanted to," offices for the teachers, and different sized classrooms. A second area of concern was personnel. Teachers reported that they would hire additional personnel, both to lessen existing instructional loads and to fund new positions. Six interviewees discussed the need for additional support staff--teacher aides, departmental secretaries, custodial staff, supervisory staff, a school nurse, and so forth. Funding for one position surfaced throughout the interviews--additional secretaries, especially at the departmental level. Only one teacher suggested higher teacher pay, possibly because teachers simply did not see this much control attached to the responsibility we gave them in our

hypothetical restructured school examples. Perhaps not so surprisingly, only one teacher believed that students should in some way influence the distribution of funds.

In terms of schedules, changes were envisioned both in schools and classrooms. Although not all teachers addressed alterations in school schedules, there was a feeling among those who did that the school year could be effectively reorganized. The teachers were generally in favor of a year-round schooling plan and replacing the traditional long summer break with shorter but more frequent respites. These teachers would restructure classroom schedules so that their work (and that of the students) would be controlled less by the clock and by organizational routines and more by the dictates of learning activities themselves. In their restructured schools, external interruptions that encroached on learning time would be greatly reduced. Finally, nine of the teachers wanted to reform school schedules so that they could spend more time with fewer students --a theme reinforced by their views on uses of time and on the importance of human relations in the schools of tomorrow.

Our teacher respondents did not have well-developed expectations about the nature of professional development activities in which they would be engaged in their restructured schools. Other than some recurring background discussions about the need (or lack thereof) to attach financial incentives to professional development--a concern largely attributable to political events unfolding in Tennessee at the time of the interviews--few themes emerged. One that did has already been noted, that is, the belief that teachers would need assistance in learning the administrative skills

needed to help manage a decentralized school. The other commonly perceived need in this regard was for professional development in the area of human relations.

Student outcomes. When pressed to discuss the effects of restructuring on students, almost all of the teachers saw both social and academic benefits. The 10 teachers who focused primarily on academic outcomes conveyed the general feeling that things would improve. Although some of this group concentrated on the issue of basic literacy, others described improvements in more advanced skills such as critical thinking, creativity, inquisitiveness, and independence of thought. The following comment from a high school English teacher is representative of this latter group:

> The system, as it stands, encourages and rewards students for conforming, for not questioning, and for allowing themselves to become powerless . . . Ideally, restructured schools would encourage them to feel powerful and independent and to ask questions and understand what they're doing, without having to be disruptive about it.

Other teachers maintained that restructured schools would encourage students to challenge themselves and would help them develop a sense of excitement about their education--an excitement that would manifest itself not only within the school environment but beyond it, both during and after formal schooling. These teachers underscored the importance of teaching lifelong skills in restructured schools. They hoped that restructured schools would help students learn to take responsibility for themselves as individuals and as learners, to develop a sense of responsibility for their

peers, their environment, and their futures, and to become integral, successful members of society. They spoke repeatedly of enhanced self-esteem and of students taking control of their own destinies.

Somewhat surprisingly, even when the focus was on student outcomes, teachers had little to say about testing. It is clear, however, that they did not define improvement in terms of increased scores on standardized tests (see also Schlechty, 1990). There is some evidence that they saw the restructuring movement as a vehicle either to reduce reliance on testing or to refocus testing on the types of outcomes they considered to be most important, especially helping students learn to think.

As with almost all the topics these teachers discussed, a sense of realism was embedded in their pictures of improved education resulting from restructuring. For example, one teacher worried that students would become frustrated and confused as they became caught between "a thinking, liberal [school] system versus a controlling system of the family [which] is saying, 'don't think.'" A second teacher was concerned that restructuring might not benefit all children and worried about the loner, "the shy one being lost in the shuffle."

Teachers saw the link between their empowerment and outcomes for students. For example, one respondent noted that teachers who "felt like they had a little bit more control over what was going on on a daily basis could exert that to the benefit of the student." They also saw the connection between the learning environment that would result from restructuring--"a kinder and gentler" one in the words of one junior

high mathematics teacher --and the types of outcomes they hoped for for their students.

Conclusion

In many ways the complexity of the responses of these teachers is masked in this article. The manner in which each teacher approached restructuring was affected by individual classroom experiences, by the age of the teacher's students, and by tenure as a teacher. In this article we were much less interested in these differences, however, than we were in uncovering areas where teachers spoke with a common voice. We searched for themes. In so doing, we allowed these respondents to provide some clues about what the schools of tomorrow might look like if teachers' voices are heard. Together with the other ways of knowing noted at the outset (national reports, analogues, restructuring efforts in pioneering districts, teacher effects and effective schools research, and recent research on cognition) their responses allow us to construct an image of restructuring schools at both the classroom and school levels.

In many ways, the views expressed by this group of teachers are consistent with information about restructuring from the other sources. For example, the interest in a less superficial and more integrated curriculum is heard on almost all fronts these days. So too are demands for additional teacher choice and a call for instructional strategies that recognize the complexity of teaching and the importance of cooperative work. As with other stakeholders in the educational reform movement (Ginsberg & Wimpelberg, 1987; Levin, 1988; Murphy, 1990, in press, chapter 6), the

teachers in our sample paid almost no attention to the expenditures associated with their suggestions, with the opportunity costs (or loss of benefits associated with unselected alternatives) accompanying the selection of specific reforms, nor with the cost-benefit ratios of various packages of reforms. Future investigations in this area should consider approaches that force respondents to grapple with issues of preferred reforms within the context of costs and benefits.

In some ways, though, these teachers' perspectives on restructuring are clearly different from others reported in the literature. They present a much richer picture of the teaching-learning process than is found in most other sources. Nowhere is this more obvious than in their discussions of the outcomes they want for their students, especially their emphasis on self-esteem. In contrast, they envision a much more limited role for parents than is found in the general literature on restructuring.

Working in schools every day, these teachers provide us with a more grounded view of restructuring than do policymakers. It is as if they had one foot in the schools they currently occupy and one poised to step into a new world. Throughout their conversations are statements of caution, concern, doubt, and trepidation. The current system--organizational norms and structures--is so deeply entrenched that it is often difficult for them to think beyond it. And when they are able to, they express a nagging fear that the current system may be immutable--that in a clash between what is and what might be, the current system will prevail. At the same time, these teachers are able to envision schools of tomorrow, sometimes clearly, sometimes obliquely, with a sense of hope and passion. There was an unmistakable optimism

in their responses. Their voices--concerns, hopes, strategies--and those of their colleagues need to be heard as efforts to restructure schooling in this country continue.

In this article, we presented the findings from an exploratory study. We heard from only 14 teachers who occupied diverse roles in their schools. Clearly we must exercise considerable caution in drawing conclusions from these interviews. On the other hand, the study does help lay the methodological and substantive groundwork for further investigations (see Hallinger, Murphy, & Hausman, forthcoming). It also raises some interesting questions that merit attention. For example, where are teachers in agreement or at odds with perspectives on restructuring that are fashionable in policy circles and/or academic communities? We hope that this exploratory study will encourage more attention to the views of teachers in the restructuring debate. And we encourage others to expand and/or modify the portrayal of teachers' views of restructuring presented herein.

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Appendix

Questionnaire

Thank you for participating in this study. Without your help our work is impossible.

One of the most recent attempts to improve schooling is called "restructuring schools." This is a broad-based attempt to reform education by ensuring: (1) that important decisions (for example, curriculum, budget, personnel, etc.) are made at the school level rather than at the district office; and (2) that teachers are equal partners (with the principal and parents) in making these decisions.

In this study we are trying to understand what "restructuring" means from the perspective of classroom teachers. Your answers to the seven questions listed below will help us to do this. Your cooperation and thoughtful descriptions are greatly appreciated.

Thanks again for your participation.

NOTE: Questions 1-4 are deliberately non-specific. We want to know what teachers think about restructuring without laying on them our ideas or frameworks of where we see possible changes. It is important to hear their thoughts before the focused questions (5-7) occur--even if their responses are limited.

For the next hour we want you to project--to pretend that you are working in one of these "restructured schools" where important decisions are made at the school level and where teachers, parents, and the principal share authority for those decisions.

1. a) What do you think of the idea of restructured schools? A good idea; bad idea?

   b) Do you think that "restructuring schools" will have an impact on anything? Any group? If so, who will be affected and how?

2. What types of broad changes do you think need to be made to make restructuring work?

3. Given that most decisions in your restructured school can be made at the school level by the teachers, parents, students, and the principal together, list the type of changes you would like to see made at the school level--not within your individual classroom but things that would affect all teachers (for example, changes in the classroom schedule)

4. One of the major reasons that teachers and others are trying to restructure schools is to improve student learning. The belief is that if important decisions are made close to the students (that is, by the school staff rather than by district staff) and if teachers and possibly students, are heavily involved in those decisions, things will improve for students. In your restructured schools what changes would you make to improve student learning at the classroom level?

   a) in the teaching-learning process (that is, the way you teach the way your students learn).

   b) in your relationship with your students

   c) in the climate or atmosphere in your classroom

5. The following topics are often mentioned as possible areas where change might occur in schools where the teachers and the principal together make the decisions and in which they have considerable authority over each area. Project yourself into a "restructured school." What changes would you envision in each of the following areas?

   NOTE: You will need to rephrase/repeat the content in question 5 a number of times as you work through a-m. Do not lead with any probes until teachers run out of their own ideas.

   a) school budget (the way money is spent, including funds for personnel)

   b) the curriculum

   c) the climate/atmosphere of the school

   d) professional development

   e) the school schedule (length of year; school day; class periods; etc.)

   f) the way teachers spend their time

   g) the way teachers teach

   h) the ways students are organized for learning (grade level, class level is by ability vs interest; homogenous vs heterogenous)

   i) procedures used to manage student behavior

   j) outcomes for students

   k) student interactions with other students

l) students interactions with you

m) the culture/climate of the classroom

6. Imagine that you have been elected to the school improvement team in your newly restructured school. This team is comprised of teachers and the principal and is empowered to make important decisions about curriculum, staffing, budget, etc. To date the school improvement team has made many decisions regarding the scheduling of various activities in the best interests of students. Now you need to do something to improve student learning, something that must occur within the classroom itself. You have complete freedom to rearrange schedules, class grouping, and purchase needed materials. What would you do?

7. Your school improvement team has just decided on the following goal for your school--to improve student responsibility for learning. You are attempting to create a classroom with a learning orientation, as opposed to a work orientation, as this is what the school improvement team feels would be the wisest choice. What will you do differently to establish that orientation?